



FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FRHS LogMark

November, 2023

A message from your Board of Directors:

Keith Hudson, President; Robin Walter, Vice President & School Liaison; Jean Hudson, Secretary; Lee Beard, Treasurer; Trustees: Judy Gager, Larry Alman, Steve Kemp, Bill Garlick, Cory Smith, Susan McDonnell, Ryan Schlehuber, Bo Stephenson



For an exciting 51st year of sharing the history of Greenville and surrounding community,

we say T H A N K Y O U . . .

... to over 2000 museum **visitors** in 2023, including about 350 **students** whose teachers supplemented their classroom curriculum with a “field trip” to the museum to have hands-on learning about Native Americans, fur traders and lumberjacks. Thanks to the great group of **volunteers** who made it happen; we are grateful!

... to the green-thumbed **gardeners** who raked, weeded, dead-headed and mulched to keep our Victorian Garden so lovely for the many photographers who thought it worthy to be the backdrop of their photos.

...to the many **golfers and sponsors** who supported our June golf outing. What a great community to come together for such events and have fun to benefit our programs and museum!

... to **participants** of our rainy-day indoor Garden Tea Party, enjoying treats and apron string entertainment.

... to all the **families** who came to celebrate our Meijer Sandy Pony’s fun-filled “Happy Birthday”.

... to **Bob Outman** for sharing his antique vehicle and driving us in the Danish Festival parade.

... to the **family members of all ages** who visited during Grandparent Day and “walked back in time” to reminisce and share times past with the younger generation and one another.

... to the talented **Dr. Gary Hauck** who helped us celebrate our “Feeding the Family” theme and also enlightened us with his presentation, “They Call Me Reverend Amble”, based on his recent biographical novel.

...to the **spooks** who created our Haunted Museum Fright Night and to over 400 folks who braved going through it...AND to our **costumed friends** who passed out candy later to over 500 Trick/Treaters!

... to **Charlotte Lothian** for her diligence in scheduling volunteers for open houses and other events ... and to the many **volunteers** who said “Yes” when called and asked to serve. We couldn’t SUCCEED without you!

... to the **Per Gradus club** for sharing their digitized old movies of events in the past, to show us what creative fun was like in our community in days gone by.

... to former board members **Carolyn Garlick, Rae Anne Beard, Kelly Whitmer Dietz** for their past service.

AND SPECIAL THANKS to all who faithfully renew their memberships and support us with their donations, grants and sponsorships. You all are the lifeblood of our society and we appreciate your participation!

Meet our new board members:



Ryan “Scoop” Schlehuber rejoined the Board after a few years’ hiatus. He’s always been fascinated by history and says preserving the past is important to teach current and future generations, which is one of the biggest reasons he rejoined the board.

Mark ‘Bo’ Stephenson, AKA “Bo the Plumber”, has “fixed” things at the museum, and has watched the growth of the museum through the years. He looks forward to furthering the continued evolvement of this wonderful organization in Greenville with fellow museum members.





Have you met Jack Haggerty?

A new addition in 2023 was the introduction of a museum mascot named “Jack”, inspired by the lumberjack song, “*Jack Haggerty and His Flat River Girl*”. Jack was the inspiration of our new board member, Ryan Schlehuber, who offered to research various mascots and found one he liked. The board agreed and Jack joined us. He first appeared in the Danish Festival Parade and was a big hit, with smiling waves from parade-watchers and even a few photo-op hugs along the way. He has also appeared at a variety of museum events. Look for him at future activities and say hello!



“Jack” recently thrilled local fourth graders when he greeted their arrival at the museum and cheered them on in their lumberjack activities!



Keith Hudson did a presentation about Jack Haggerty at the annual meeting. The following article from a past Logmark newsletter in 2014 is repeated here to share the history of this lumberjack and his song.

The Story of Jack Haggerty and His Flat River Girl

The Flat River rises in Six Lakes and empties into the Grand River. It cuts through what was once known as the great pine belt of Michigan. In 1865-66, 35 million feet of logs were cut and floated down the river. Much of it ended up at Grand Haven and shipped to Chicago. Greenville historian Wyman Bock recorded in the 1930’s that old-timers remembered seeing all banks of the Six Lakes piled 30 feet high with logs waiting for the spring drive.

Greenville then was a small, bustling lumber town with wooden plank sidewalks, roughened and splintered by the lumbermen’s caulked boots. At 218 N. Lafayette (now a laundromat) was the house of Anne Tucker, the heroine of the song. Her father’s blacksmith shop was across the street.

In front of their house was a very large buckeye tree that was 10 feet in circumference. It was the show tree of Greenville that sprouted from a twig her mother brought from Ohio. The Grand Rapids Press did a feature story on this house and tree in 1937.

Hundreds of lumberjacks lived in camps throughout Montcalm County. After their work of felling trees, they returned to the camp for their evening meal. A no talking rule was enforced to prevent arguments. After dinner, they had to provide their own entertainment. Fiddles, guitars, mandolins, and dulcimers were brought out for singing and dancing to the numerous lumbering folk songs that were known throughout the camps. (continued next page)

“Jack Haggerty and His Flat River Girl”

Folklorists such as E.C. Beck, Alan Lomax, and Franz Rickaby recorded many of these songs. “Jack Haggerty and his Flat River Girl” made Greenville famous throughout the lumber camps. Historians say that with the exception of “The Jam On Gerry’s Rocks”, this is the best known of the shanty boy ballads. By 1890, it had made its way to Maine and Ontario, Canada. Two cowboy versions were recorded in Texas.

The characters in the song were real but the story was not. According to Wyman Bock, the melody was written by S.L. Tyler, a music teacher in the Greenville schools.

In the late 1860’s, Dan McGinnis wandered into town. He was a big burly redheaded Irishman. He was a raftsmen and an entertainer. He was assigned to work at the camp where George Mercer worked.

At the same camp was Jack Haggerty, a ne’er do well. As a result of his many saloon brawls, he was known as “Split Nose Haggerty.” Though Dan McGinnis was in love with the pretty Anne Tucker, she was engaged to George Mercer. Neither he nor Jack Haggerty was allowed to go near her. When George Mercer was promoted to “Woods Boss,” Dan McGinnis was furious for being over-looked. He composed the words to this song as an outlet for his rage. To conceal his identity, he used the name of Jack Haggerty. At first the song humiliated the Tucker family, but later, Anne saw it as a joke and even sang it herself to some of her Canadian friends.

As the song traveled from camp to camp and state to state, names and words were often changed to fit the location. It was known by various names including: “Jack Haggerty” “Flat River Girl” and “Jack Haggerty and His Flat River Girl.” (Several versions of the song are available on youtube.)

*“I am a brokenhearted raftsmen from Greenville I came.
I courted a lassie, a lass of great fame.
But cruel-hearted Cupid has caused me much grief.
My heart, it’s asunder - I can ne’er find relief.*

*My troubles I’ll tell you without more delay:
A comely young lassie my heart stole away.
‘Twas a blacksmith’s only daughter from Flat River side,
And I always intended for to make her my bride.*

*I brought her rich jewels and the finest of lace.
With the costliest of muslins it was her I’d embrace.
I gave her my wages for her to keep safe.
I begrudged her of nothing that I had myself.*

*My name is Jack Haggerty where the white waters flow.
My name it’s engraved on the rocks of the shore.
I’m a boy that stands happy on a log in the streams.
My heart was with Anna, for she haunted my dreams.*

*I went up the river some money to make.
I was steadfast and steady, I ne’er played the rake.
Through Hart and through Shelby I am very well-known.
They call me Jack Haggerty, the pride of the town.*

*One day on the river a letter I received
That it was from her promises herself she’d relieved.
She’d be wed to a young man, who a long time delayed,
And the next time I’d see her she would not be a maid.*

*Then adieu to Flat River. For me there’s no rest.
I’ll shoulder my peavey, and I’ll go out West.
I’ll go to Muskegon some pleasures to find,
And I’ll leave my own Flat River darling behind.*

*So come all you jolly raftsmen with hearts stout and true,
Don’t depend on a woman; you’re sunk if you do.
And if you chance to see one with dark chestnut curls,
Just think of Jack Haggerty and his Flat River girl.”*

(For more info about the songs of the Michigan lumberjacks, the Library of Congress has a free downloadable pdf file of songs recorded by Alan Lomax and Henry Welliver. You can Google search: “Songs of the Michigan Lumberjacks” to find it.)



Eureka Township Hall was built in 1906, donated to the Flat River Historical Society in 1980 and moved next to the museum. Watch for future renovations and information.

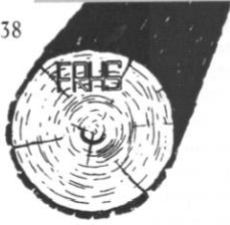
Thank You!

... FOR YOUR ONGOING MEMBERSHIP AND YOUR SPECIAL GIFTS THAT HELP SO MUCH!

LOGMARK

FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 188
Greenville, MI 48838



**Museum is closed for
the season and
will reopen in April.
Private tours can be
arranged.**

Flat River Historical Society

P. O. Box 188 • Greenville, MI 48838 • 616-754-5296

APPLICATION FOR NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

Dues payable at the beginning of the calendar year – pay online at flatrivermuseum.org – click “donate”

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

Email address _____ Logmarks will be emailed unless checked: _____

(Emailed newsletters are in color and save postage costs)

___ Single - \$15.00 ___ Family - \$25.00 ___ Annual Business - \$50.00

___ New ___ Renewal Date _____ Additional Donation _____

Would you like to be a volunteer? _____ The Flat River Historical Society needs you!

Fill in this membership form and return it with your check to the above address or pay online at flatrivermuseum.org. Dues are payable at the beginning of the calendar year. If you have already paid your membership dues for the year 2024, we **thank you** and want you to know that your membership is the lifeblood of the society.